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Sixteenth Report

**COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS OF
THE VIETNAM AND LAOS SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS**

(This report covers the week from
1 June through 7 June 1973)

DIA Review
Completed.

*This memorandum has been prepared jointly by the
Central Intelligence Agency and the Department of Defense*

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Sixteenth Report

COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS OF
THE VIETNAM AND LAOS SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS*

(This report covers the week from
1 June through 7 June 1973)

The Key Points

- Only a few civil and military specialists began the infiltration trip south from North Vietnam during the week. One group of NVA combat personnel, however, was detected en route to northern Laos.
- A number of North Vietnamese units have recently made significant moves, or are planning moves, from one area to another within Indochina.
- The downward trend of North Vietnamese logistic activity in the Laotian Panhandle has continued as the rainy season progresses. There is still moderately heavy Communist logistic activity, on the other hand, in northern South Vietnam.
- Combat activity in violation of the ceasefire increased toward the end of the week in South Vietnam, and remained at a low level in Laos.

* This report has been prepared jointly by the Central Intelligence Agency and the Department of Defense.

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The Details

NOTE: This is the sixteenth in a series of reports detailing recently received evidence of (a) Communist efforts to infiltrate new manpower and military materiel toward and into South Vietnam, and (b) Communist-initiated combat activity in violation of the Vietnam and Laos settlement agreements.

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A. Infiltration and Redeployments of North Vietnamese Personnel

1. Only one group of NVA combat personnel (specific strength unknown) was detected entering the infiltration system and starting the trip out of North Vietnam during the week. This group was headed toward northern Laos rather than South Vietnam, and it was the first infiltration group of combat personnel observed traveling to the northern Laos area since November 1972. Four small groups of civil and military specialists were the only new North Vietnamese personnel observed infiltrating toward South Vietnam during the week.

2. Our total estimate of North Vietnamese personnel infiltrated into South Vietnam or adjacent border areas since 27 January still stands at some 50,000 -- 25,000 of whom were already in the infiltration pipeline as of 27 January plus 25,000 who started their infiltration trip since that date. (ANNEX II, [] contains a more detailed discussion of the information pertaining to infiltration which was received during the past week.)

3. During the past week, we have also received evidence that a number of Communist units have recently redeployed from one area to another within

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Indochina, or are planning to redeploy. The headquarters of an NVA administrative services regiment which had been employed in support of the infiltration pipeline along a portion of the Ho Chi Minh Trail in southeastern Laos, for example, moved from that area to western Pleiku Province of South Vietnam's MR 2. This redeployment follows the recent relocation of two major NVA logistic authorities from Laos into western South Vietnam and indicates a continuation of an eastward shift of the NVA rear services apparatus into South Vietnam this rainy season. It also suggests that--if infiltration continues in the future--a number of North Vietnamese infiltrators may move south via the new road system within South Vietnam. Other evidence clearly indicates, however, that the North Vietnamese are by no means abandoning their present road network in southern Laos. (See paragraph 9 below).

4. Farther south, an NVA antiaircraft regiment apparently has deployed through Cambodia into South Vietnam's MR 3. The move -- to Loc Ninh in Binh Long Province -- occurred in March 1973, but we only received firm evidence of the move last week. This is the first time that an NVA air defense regiment has been detected so far south, and the unit will significantly augment Communist air defense capabilities in northern MR 3. In another redeployment affecting northern MR 3, at least one and probably two regiments of the NVA 5th Division have recently moved from Dinh Tuong Province of MR 4 to Tay Ninh Province of MR 3.

5. In Laos, the NVA 102B Regiment may be relocating from the Saravane area of the Panhandle to North Vietnam. Although the move of the entire unit cannot yet be confirmed, the headquarters of the regiment was identified in the vicinity of Thanh Hoa, North Vietnam, in early June. Elements of the regiment were last noted to be in southern Laos in late May.

6. In the Plaine des Jarres area of northern Laos, other evidence indicates that the North Vietnamese are currently preparing to redeploy a number

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[redacted]

of combat units. We cannot yet determine the extent and direction of the planned movements, but they appear to involve elements of at least the NVA 316th Division, and the NVA 88th Infantry Regiment. These units have been operating in the vicinity of the Plaine des Jarres for some months and probably are simply repositioning themselves for the rainy season, although we cannot preclude the possibility that they are preparing for a withdrawal to North Vietnam.

7. There have also been several recent changes in the air defense posture of Communist units within North Vietnam. At least two North Vietnamese SAM regiments have moved from the Thanh Hoa area of central North Vietnam to locations farther south in the North Vietnamese Panhandle. This further strengthens the major Communist air defense complex which Hanoi has been building in the whole area of southern North Vietnam, northern South Vietnam, and the Laotian Panhandle. (ANNEX III, [redacted] 25X1
[redacted] contains a more detailed discussion of the moves of these SAM regiments.)

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B. Movement of Military Equipment and Supplies Through and Into Laos and South Vietnam

8. Continuing the downward trend since the rainy season began, observed NVA logistic activity during the reporting period was extremely light over the entire Laotian Panhandle. Although some cargo is still being moved in most areas of southern Laos, only small numbers of vehicles are being observed. Within the northern areas of South Vietnam, where inclement weather is not a factor until later this year, moderately heavy Communist logistic activity is still in progress. A substantial volume of activity also continues to be observed in the southern part of the North Vietnam Panhandle.

9. We have reported over the past several weeks that the Communists have been engaged in a major road-building effort in northern and western South Vietnam.

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[REDACTED]

We have suggested that the Communists might, over time, shift a significant portion of their traffic from the Ho Chi Minh Trail system in southern Laos to this new road network within South Vietnam. Recently received evidence, however, makes it clear that the North Vietnamese are also carrying out a major program of widening and improving the existing roads in the Laotian Panhandle. The North Vietnamese are presently working on roads in a number of locations in southern Laos, and the pattern of the roads being improved suggests that Hanoi intends eventually to link the various segments into a 300 mile all-season high capacity road from the entry passes on the North Vietnamese border southward to the tri-border area.

10. The following instances of Communist logistic activity were observed in South Vietnam during the period. Activity observed in South Vietnam probably reflects supplies which have recently entered the country. (The map on the following page shows the roads and route numbers which appear below.)

- a) During the period 24 through 30 May, an NVA logistic unit operating in the Cua Viet River region of northeastern Quang Tri Province had over 5,400 vehicles active in its area. About half of the vehicles were cargo trucks. (ANNEX IV, [REDACTED] contains more details on this item.)

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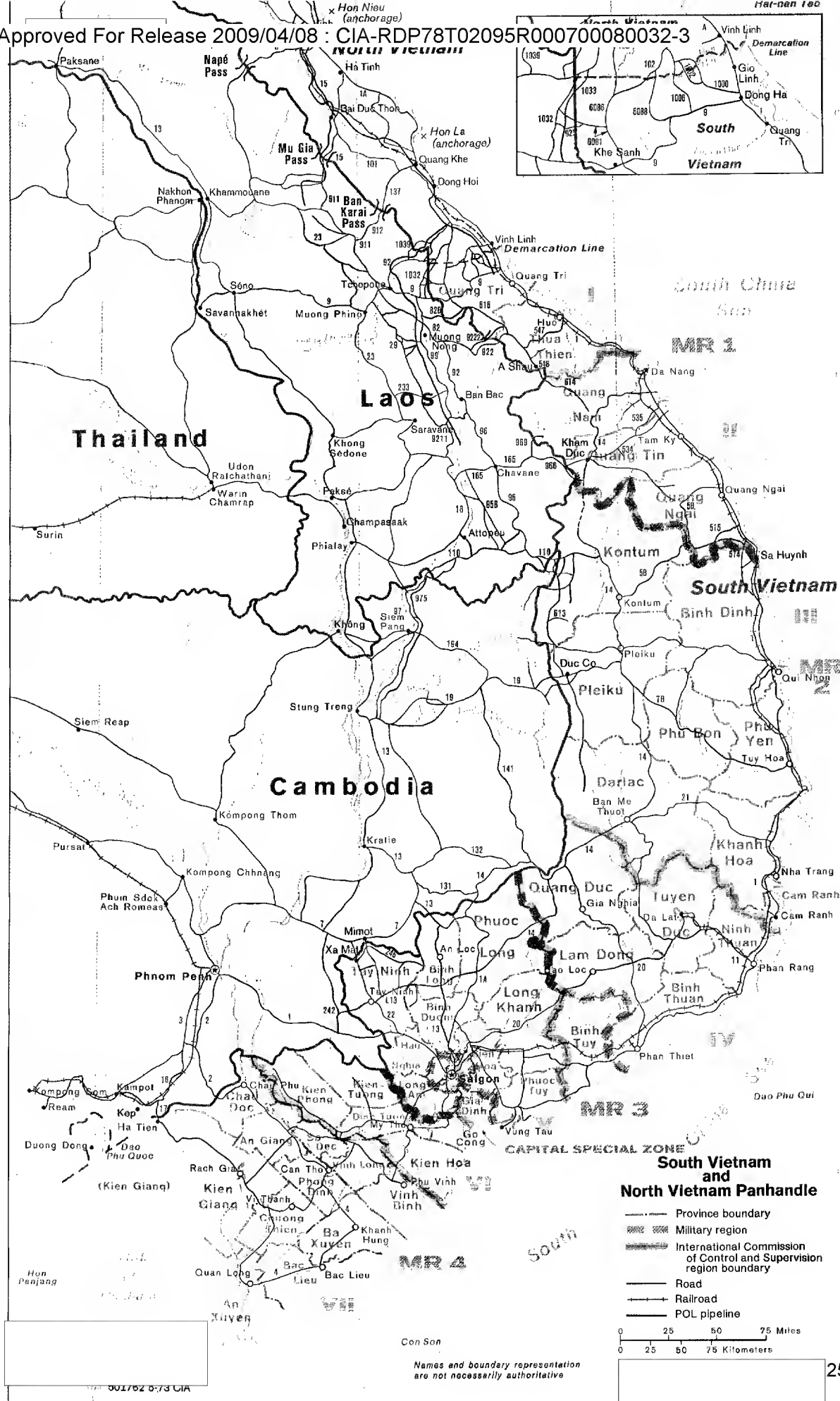
- b) [REDACTED] 56 cargo vehicles were observed on Route 548 southwest of Khe Sanh (9 northbound, 22 southbound, 25 parked).

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- c) [REDACTED] 32 cargo trucks were seen on Route 1 north of Dong Ha (9 northbound, 2 southbound, 21 parked). On the same day 16 cargo vehicles were noted on Route 9 between Dong Ha and Khe Sanh (4 eastbound, 9 westbound, 3 parked).

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- d) [] 29 cargo trucks were traveling on Route 616 southeast of Khe Sanh (3 northbound, 16 southbound, 10 parked).
- e) [] 111 cargo trucks were observed on Route 9 between Dong Ha and the Laos/South Vietnam border (44 eastbound, 24 westbound, 43 parked).
- f) [] 11 cargo vehicles were seen on Route 1 north of Dong Ha (6 northbound, 5 southbound). On the same day, 20 cargo vehicles were traveling on Route 548 north of the A Shau Valley (9 northbound, 6 southbound, 5 parked).

11. During the reporting period the following indications of North Vietnamese logistic activity in Laos were noted. Historical precedent would suggest that much of the activity in southern Laos probably involved supplies destined for South Vietnam.

- a) The table below lists observed NVA vehicle activity on selected routes in the Laos Panhandle during the reporting period.*

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	<u>Route 99</u>	<u>Route 9211</u>	<u>Route 958</u>
	22 (14-N, 8-S)	3 (1-N, 1-S)	0
	3 (3-S)	14 (2-N, 6-S)	1 (1-S)
	6 (3-N, 1-S)	0	NC**
	0	0	NC**
	11 (Parked)	4 (1-N, 3-S)	0
	0	0	1 (1-S)
	0	3 (3-S)	7 (1-N)

* The first number in each entry is the total number of vehicles. Of these totals, the number of trucks moving north (N) or south (S) are noted in the parentheses after each total. The remainder of the vehicles detected were parked along the roadway.

** No coverage.

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[REDACTED]

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- b) During the first week of June, small groups of tanks were observed in the northern portion of the Laotian Panhandle on three occasions. The tanks are probably headed south, although our evidence on the direction of movement is not conclusive.
- c) [REDACTED] five field artillery pieces and six antiaircraft artillery pieces were observed deployed along Route 7, the major east/west road across the northern Plaine des Jarres. There was no evidence to indicate when these weapons entered the country. On the same date, two 37-mm AAA weapons were seen being towed west on Route 7.
- d) [REDACTED] 29 cargo trucks were observed on Route 911 northwest of Tchepone (9 northbound, 14 southbound, 6 parked). On 2 June, 28 cargo vehicles were seen on this route (2 northbound, 11 southbound, 15 parked) and on 4 June there were 21 trucks heading south on the road.
- e) [REDACTED] cargo trucks were on the segments of Route 911 southwest of the Ban Karai Pass (39 parked, 18 southbound).
- f) [REDACTED] 14 cargo vehicles were observed on Route 912 south of Ban Karai Pass (3 northbound, 11 southbound). On the same route on 5 June there were 12 cargo trucks seen (10 northbound, 2 southbound).
- g) [REDACTED] 30 cargo vehicles were seen on Route 110 west of the Laos/South Vietnam border (4 westbound, 13 eastbound, 13 parked).

[REDACTED]

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- h) [] 19 cargo vehicles were noted on Route 9 southeast of Tchepone (2 westbound, 17 eastbound).

12. There is additional evidence of the continuing movement within North Vietnam of military and other supplies probably destined for South Vietnam and southern Laos.

- a) On 30 and 31 May, over 130 vehicles were noted moving through the operational area of an NVA logistic unit south of Dong Hoi. Of the vehicles seen on the 31st, 16 were northbound and 42 were southbound.
- b) On 31 May, six cargo vehicles were observed transporting over 16 tons of 57-mm AAA ammunition between two storage facilities in an area near Vinh.
- c) On 1 June, 72 cargo trucks were detected moving through the Xuan Son area south of Dong Hoi. The direction in which the vehicles were moving could not be determined.
- d) On 1 June, a major NVA logistic unit which operates south of Dong Hoi received over 2,000 tons of cargo. The unit had some 300 tons of cargo on hand at the time it took delivery of these supplies.
- e) On 4 June, at least 21 tons of munitions, comprising mostly mortar rounds, were dispatched from a storage facility located in the Vinh area.
- f) On 5 June, 20 tons of weapons and ammunition were transported on seven cargo vehicles between two storage facilities located in the Vinh area.

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- g) On 5 June, 25 northbound and 40 southbound cargo vehicles were observed crossing the Troc River south of Dong Hoi.

C. Combat Activity Initiated by Communist Forces in South Vietnam Since the Ceasefire

13. In South Vietnam, the total number of Communist-initiated ceasefire violations reported by the South Vietnamese Armed Forces since 27 January and for the last week (1-7 June) are shown below:

<u>Military Region</u>	<u>Total Since Ceasefire Level of Action</u>		<u>Last Week (1-7 June) Level of Action</u>	
	Major	Minor	Major	Minor
MR 1	991	3,253	32	76
MR 2	240	1,757	12	68
MR 3	385	2,415	17	130
MR 4	621	5,820	25	268
Totals	2,237	13,245	86 (80) <u>1/</u>	542 (496) <u>1/</u>

1/ Denotes totals of previous week.

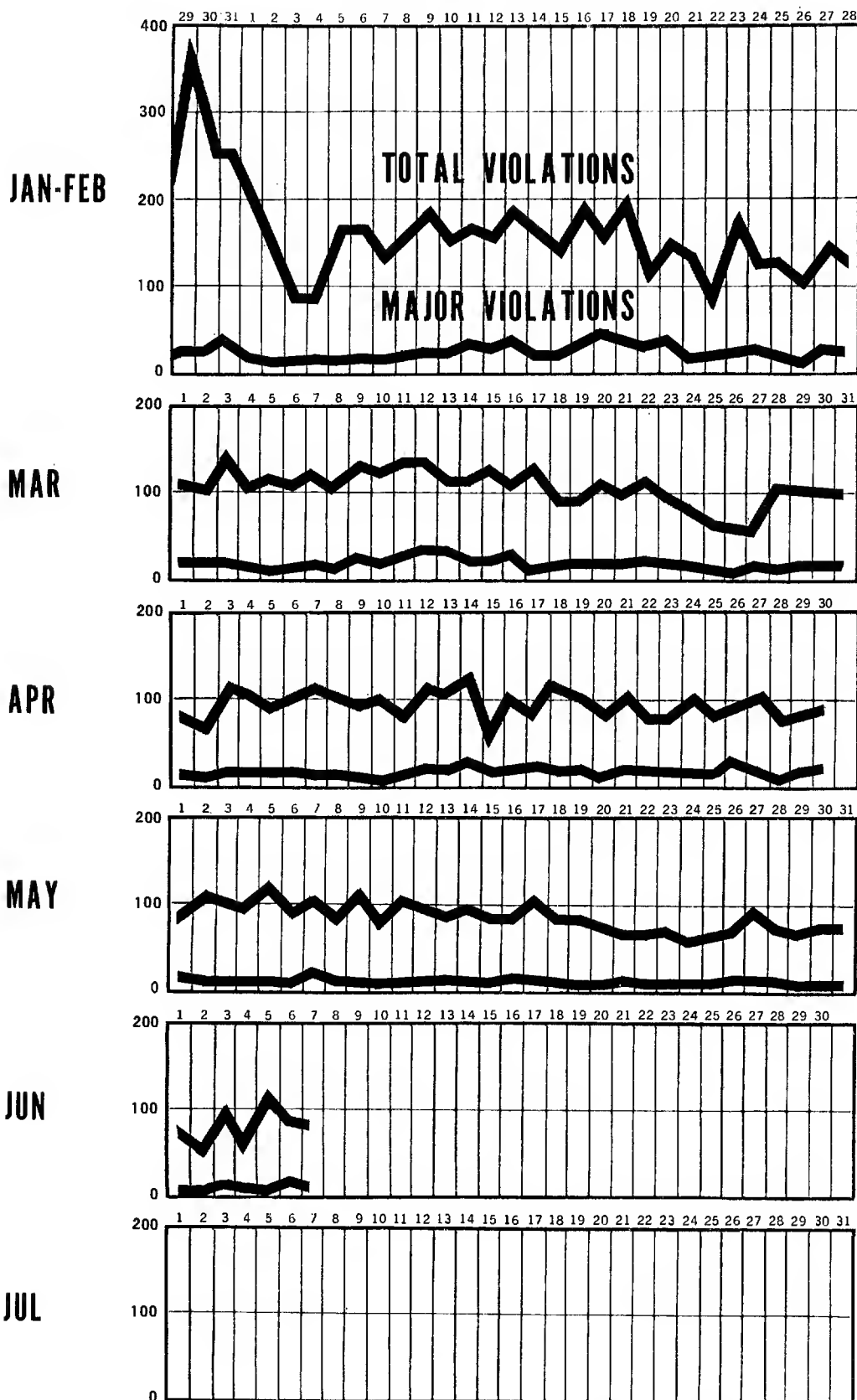
14. Some of these violations may have been initiated by GVN forces rather than Communist forces, and it is impossible in all cases to determine the actual instigator. The table above and the chart on the following page, however, do show fairly accurately the trend in the amount of combat that has occurred in South Vietnam since the ceasefire. The fact that a combat incident occurred at a particular time and place is generally reported accurately by the South Vietnamese, even though the question of who started it may not always be treated in objective fashion. In some cases, the Joint Military Commission (GVN/PRG) also reports violations of the ceasefire.

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CEASE-FIRE VIOLATIONS IN SOUTH VIETNAM AS REPORTED BY RVNAF

(28 JANUARY 1973 TO THE PRESENT)



15. The following is a chronological listing of only the most significant "major" Communist violations of the ceasefire in South Vietnam that were reported by the South Vietnamese Armed Forces during the past week.

MILITARY REGION 1

- a) On 5 June, ARVN Forces 15 miles south-east of Da Nang received a ground attack.

MILITARY REGION 2

- a) On 2 June, a friendly unit 10 miles west of Kontum received a ground attack.
- b) On 6 June, friendly forces 8 miles south of Bong Son received an attack by fire and follow-on ground attack.

MILITARY REGION 3

- a) On 3 June, seven miles northeast of Tay Ninh, a VNAF CH-47 helicopter was downed by an SA-7 missile.

MILITARY REGION 4

- a) On 3 June, five and 13 miles northwest of Cai Lay, ARVN infantry units received two ground attacks.
- b) On 5 June, enemy forces launched a ground attack 7 miles southeast of Can Tho.
- c) On 5 June, an enemy attack 7 miles west of Vi Thanh resulted in heavy casualties on both sides.
- d) On 6 June, ARVN positions 15 miles north of Vinh Long received a ground attack.

D. Combat Activity Initiated by Communist Forces
in Laos During the Week From 1 Through 7 June

16. Small Communist-initiated attacks occurred in both Military Regions 1 and 2 of northern Laos toward the end of the week, while southern Laos remained generally calm throughout the period. Specific incidents included:

- a) On 6 June, Royal Lao Government troops in the Mekong River town of Pak Tha on the Sayaboury/Luang Prabang Province border reported they were under attack by an estimated company. Villagers in the area had earlier reported a build-up of four Pathet Lao companies south-east of Pak Tha which allegedly planned to attack Pak Tha and Ban Houei Sai in Houa Khong Province.
- b) Also on 6 June, government troops at the San Soak airstrip in extreme northern Khammouane Province were forced to withdraw westward following an attack by an estimated company. This RLG enclave, which is defended only by local militia forces, has come under increasing pressure in the past two weeks.

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ANNEX II

Post-Ceasefire Infiltration of North Vietnamese
Personnel to the South

1. During the reporting period, one regular infiltration group--of unknown size--was detected entering the pipeline at Binh Tram 18 in Vinh, North Vietnam. The number of the group, 9034, indicates that it is composed of combat troops destined for northern Laos. This is the first time since early November 1972 that a group in this series has been noted entering the pipeline. Its appearance at the start of the rainy season is highly unusual, since the North Vietnamese normally do not send new combat troops to northern Laos at this time of year.

2. Four small special-purpose groups headed toward South Vietnam were also detected for the first time during the past week. Three of these groups were observed at Binh Tram 18, while the fourth was noted farther south in the system in northeastern Cambodia. The following table lists those infiltration groups which were initially reported during the past week.

Infiltration Groups Initially Reported
During the Past Week

<u>Group Designator</u>	<u>Strength</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Date of Detection</u>
9034	Unknown	North Vietnam	6 June
QL296	Unknown	Cambodia	31 May
QL484	106	North Vietnam	3 June
QL527	10	North Vietnam	3 June
Y470	Unknown	North Vietnam	5 June

ANNEX III

Hanoi's Changing SAM Posture
in Southern North Vietnam

During the past several weeks, Hanoi has deployed at least two SAM regiments southward into the North Vietnamese Panhandle. On 22 May, COMINT revealed that the 267th SAM Regiment had deployed to the Vinh area where it is now believed to be operational. This is the first confirmed fix on the 267th since December 1972 when the unit was known to be operating in the Thanh Hoa/Hanoi area. In early April, another SAM regiment--the 275th--began deploying southward from the Thanh Hoa area. Tenuous indications now place at least a portion of the regiment between Vinh and Dong Hoi.

ANNEX IV

The information contained in paragraph 10 (a) was obtained from an intercepted message originated by an unidentified NVA rear services unit located in the Binh Tram 12 area of operation (the eastern portion of the DMZ). The rear services unit is believed to be a vehicle checkpoint composed of teams which monitor and control traffic on roads in the Binh Tram 12 area. The precise locations of the teams are not known, so the possibility of double counting among several teams exists. Although the checkpoint has reported vehicles heading north and south in the past, this report only referred to the number of vehicles "handled," thus preventing an assessment of the direction of traffic flow. The level of traffic reported by the checkpoint (about 400 trucks per day and 400 other vehicles per day) is unsubstantiated by any other source. Photographs and fragmentary communications from other rear service elements indicate that an average of about 200-300 short tons per day (50-75 vehicles per day) may have been entering Quang Tri from North Vietnam in recent weeks. Although this is admittedly a very soft estimate, it does cast some doubt on the vehicle checkpoint reporting contained in this intercepted message.

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